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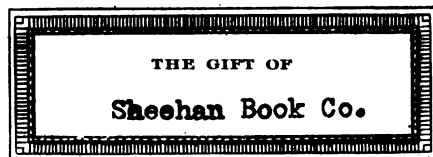
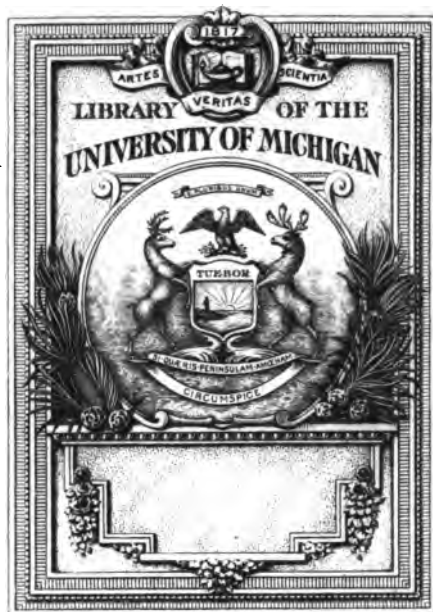
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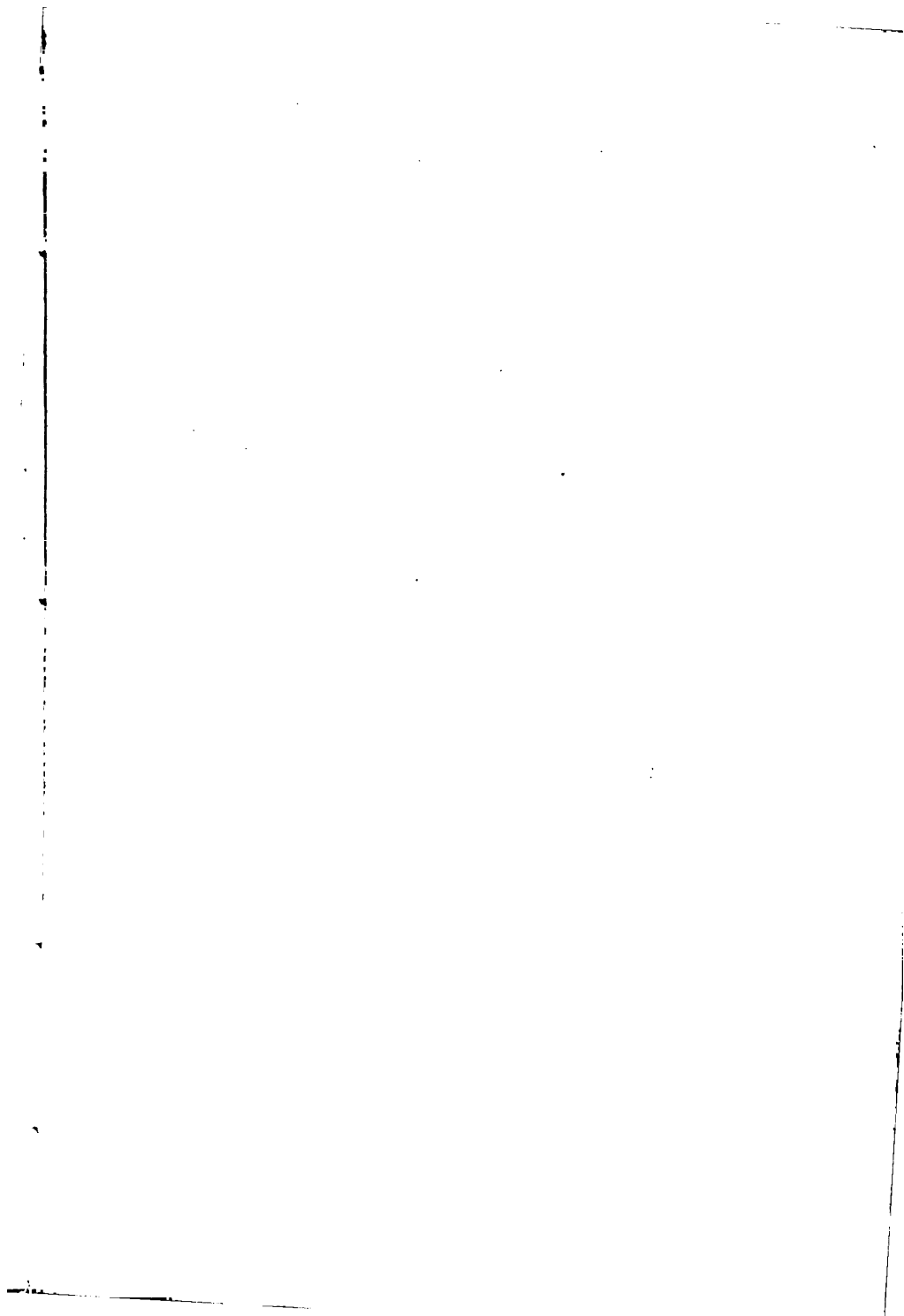
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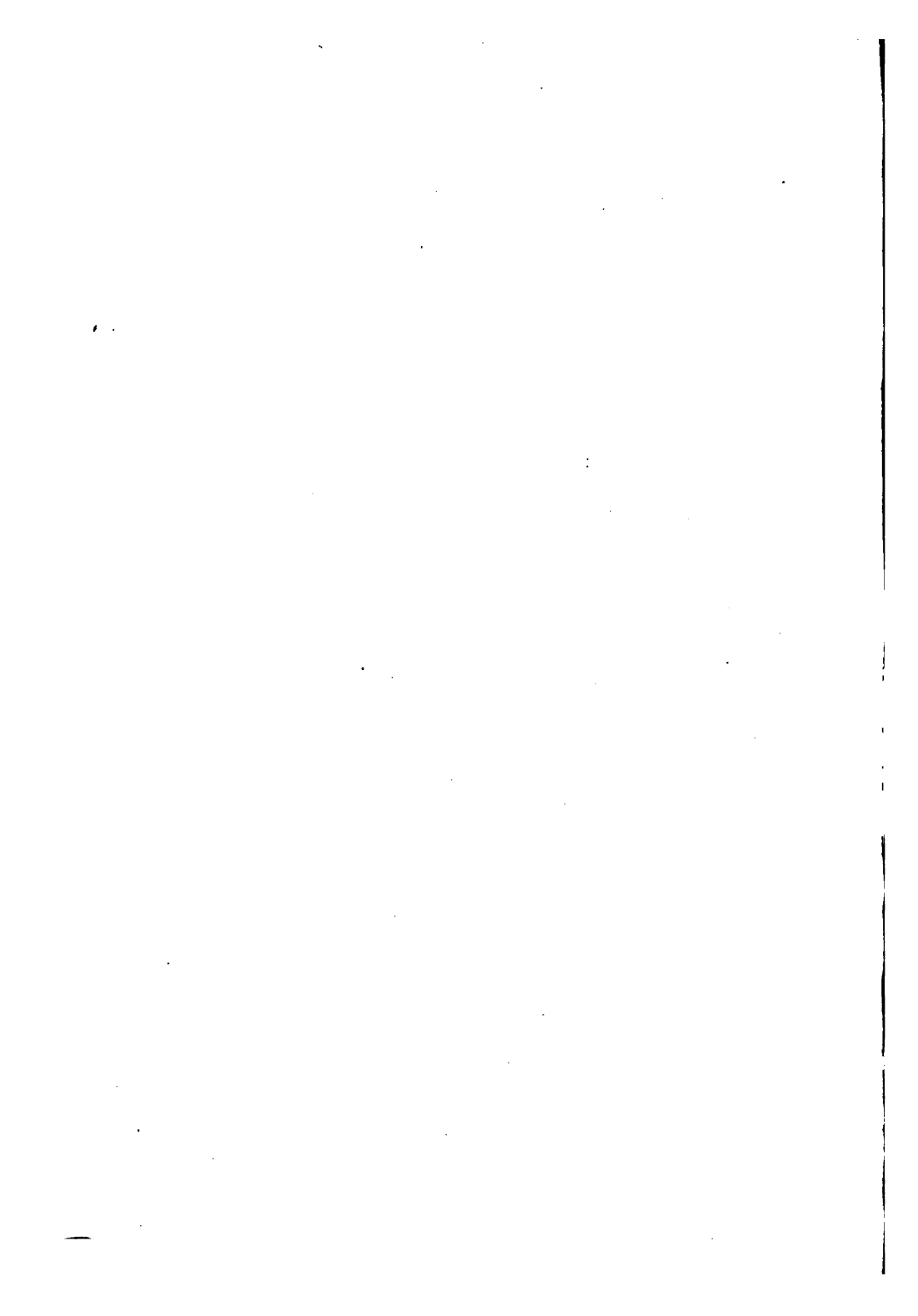
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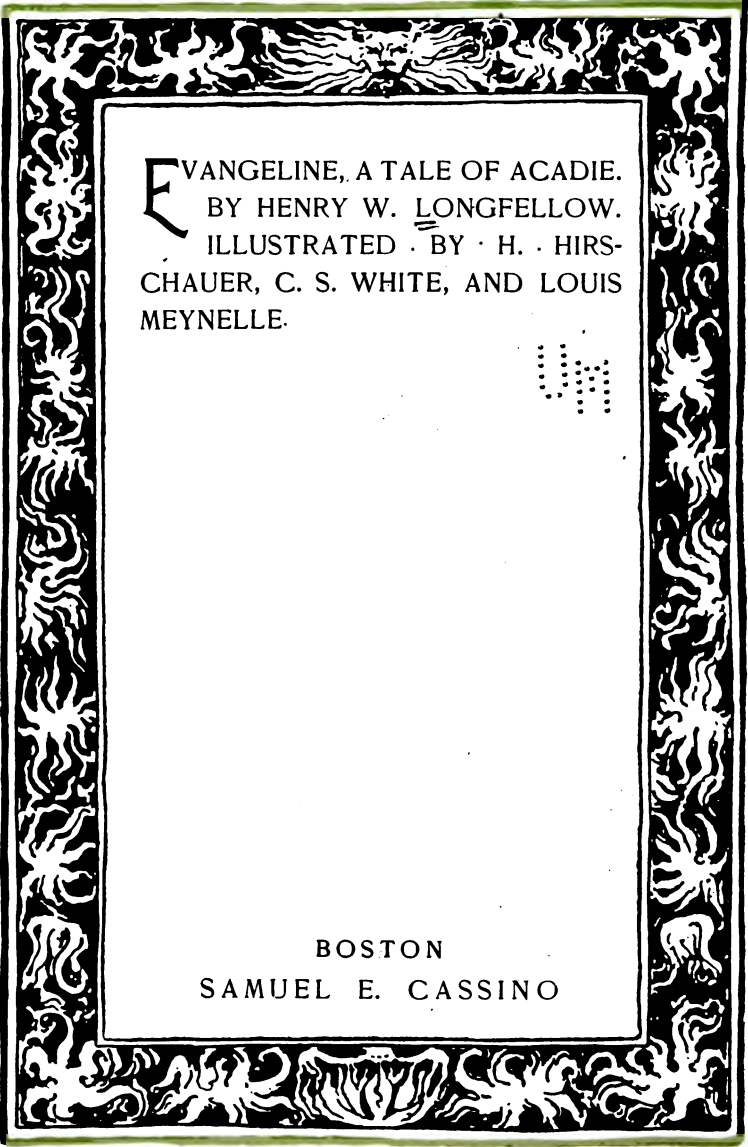


EVANGELINE,

A

TALE OF ACADIE.





**E**VANGELINE, A TALE OF ACADIE.  
BY HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.  
ILLUSTRATED · BY · H. · HIRS-  
CHAUER, C. S. WHITE, AND LOUIS  
MEYNELLE.

BOSTON  
SAMUEL E. CASSINO



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Norwood Press:  
Berwick & Smith, Boston U.S.A.

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EVANGELINE,  
A TALE OF ACADIE.

THIS is the forest primeval. The murmuring  
pines and the hemlocks,  
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, in-  
distinct in the twilight,  
Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and  
prophetic,  
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest  
on their bosoms.  
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced  
neighboring ocean  
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers  
the wail of the forest.

This is the forest primeval ; but where are the  
hearts that beneath it  
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the wood-  
land the voice of the huntsman?

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Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of  
Acadian farmers, —  
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water  
the woodlands,  
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting  
an image of heaven?  
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers  
forever departed!  
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty  
blasts of October  
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle  
them far o'er the ocean.  
Nought but tradition remains of the beautiful  
village of Grand-Pré.

Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and  
endures, and is patient,  
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of  
woman's devotion,  
List to the mournful tradition still sung by the  
pines of the forest;  
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the  
happy.







PART THE FIRST.

I.

In the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin  
of Minas,  
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of  
Grand-Pré  
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows  
stretched to the eastward,  
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks  
without number.  
Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had raised  
with labor incessant,  
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated sea-  
sons the flood-gates  
Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at will  
o'er the meadows.  
West and south there were fields of flax, and  
orchards and cornfields  
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain; and  
away to the northward  
Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on  
the mountains  
Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the  
mighty Atlantic

Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their station descended.

There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village.

Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and of hemlock,

Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign of the Henries.

Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-windows; and gables projecting

Over the basement below protected and shaded the doorway.

There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly the sunset

Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the chimneys,

Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in kirtles

Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the golden

Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles within doors

Mingled their sound with the whir of the wheels and the songs of the maidens.

Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the children

Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless them.

Reverend walked he among them; and up rose matrons and maidens,

Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate welcome.

Then came the laborers home from the field,  
and serenely the sun sank  
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon  
from the belfry

Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs  
of the village

Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense ascending,

Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace  
and contentment.

Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian  
farmers, —

Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike  
were they free from

Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the  
vice of republics.

Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars  
to their windows ;

But their dwellings were open as day and the  
hearts of the owners ;

There the richest was poor, and the poorest  
lived in abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer  
the Basin of Minas,  
Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of  
Grand-Pré,

Dwelt on his goodly acres ; and with him, directing his household,  
Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of the village.

Stalworth and stately in form was the man of seventy winters ;

Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with snow-flakes ;

White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as brown as the oak-leaves.

Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers.

Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn by the wayside,

Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown shade of her tresses !

Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the meadows,

When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noontide

Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah ! fair in sooth was the maiden.

Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the bell from its turret

Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his hyssop

Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon them,

Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of beads and her missal,





Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue,  
and the ear-rings,  
Brought in the olden time from France, and  
since, as an heirloom,  
Handed down from mother to child, through  
long generations.  
But a celestial brightness — a more ethereal  
beauty —  
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when,  
after confession,  
Homeward serenely she walked with God's bene-  
diction upon her.  
When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing  
of exquisite music.

Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house  
of the farmer  
Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea;  
and a shady  
Sycamore grew by the door, with a woodbine  
wreathing around it.  
Rudely carved was the porch, with seats beneath;  
and a footpath  
Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared  
in the meadow.  
Under the sycamore-tree were hives overhung  
by a penthouse,  
Such as the traveller sees in regions remote by  
the roadside,

Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed  
image of Mary.

Farther down, on the slope of the hill, was the  
well with its moss-grown

Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough  
for the horses.

Shielding the house from storms, on the north,  
were the barns and the farm-yard,

There stood the broad-wheeled wains and the  
antique ploughs and the harrows ;

There were the folds for the sheep ; and there,  
in his feathered seraglio,

Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock,  
with the self-same

Voice that in ages of old had startled the peni-  
tent Peter.

Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves a  
village. In each one

Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch ;  
and a staircase,

Under the sheltering eaves, led up to the odorous  
corn-loft.

There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek and  
innocent inmates

Murmuring ever of love ; while above in the  
variant breezes

Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and sang  
of mutation.



Thus, at peace with God and the world, the  
farmer of Grand-Pré  
Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline gov-  
erned his household.  
Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and  
opened his missal,  
Fixed his eyes upon her as the saint of his  
deepest devotion ;  
Happy was he who might touch her hand or the  
hem of her garment !  
Many a suitor came to her door, by the dark-  
ness befriended,  
And, as he knocked and waited to hear the  
sound of her footsteps,  
Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or  
the knocker of iron ;  
Or at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the  
village,  
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance  
as he whispered  
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of  
the music.  
But, among all who came, young Gabriel only  
was welcome ;  
Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the black-  
smith,  
Who was a mighty man in the village, and  
honored of all men ;  
For, since the birth of time, throughout all ages  
and nations,

Has the craft of the smith been held in repute  
by the people.

Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children  
from earliest childhood

Grew up together as brother and sister; and  
Father Felician,

Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had  
taught them their letters

Out of the self-same book, with the hymns of  
the church and the plain-song.

But when the hymn was sung, and the daily  
lesson completed,

Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil  
the blacksmith.

There at the door they stood, with wondering  
eyes to behold him

Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse  
as a plaything,

Nailing the shoe in its place; while near him the  
tire of the cart-wheel

Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of  
cinders.

Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the  
gathering darkness

Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through  
every cranny and crevice,

Warm by the forge within they watched the  
laboring bellows,

And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired  
in the ashes,

Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going  
into the chapel.

Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop  
of the eagle,

Down the hillside bounding, they glided away  
o'er the meadow.

Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous  
nests on the rafters,

Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone,  
which the swallow

Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the  
sight of its fledglings ;

Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest  
of the swallow !

Thus passed a few swift years, and they no  
longer were children.

He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the  
face of the morning,

Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened  
thought into action.

She was a woman now, with the heart and  
hopes of a woman.

"Sunshine of Saint Eulalie " was she called ;  
for that was the sunshine

Which, as the farmers believed, would load their  
orchards with apples ;

She, too, would bring to her husband's house  
delight and abundance,

Filling it full of love and the ruddy faces of  
children.

## II.

Now had the season returned, when the nights  
grow colder and longer,  
And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion  
enters.

Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air  
from the ice-bound,  
Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical  
islands.

Harvests were gathered in; and wild with the  
winds of September

Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of old  
with the angel.

All the signs foretold a winter long and in-  
clement.

Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had  
hoarded their honey

Till the hives overflowed; and the Indian hunt-  
ers asserted

Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur  
of the foxes.

Such was the advent of autumn. Then followed  
that beautiful season,

Called by the pious Acadian peasants the Sum-  
mer of All-Saints!

Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical  
light; and the landscape



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Lay as if new created in all the freshness of  
childhood.  
Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the rest-  
less heart of the ocean  
Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were  
in harmony blended.  
Voices of children at play, the crowing of cocks  
in the farm-yards,  
Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and the cooing  
of pigeons,  
All were subdued and low as the murmurs of  
love, and the great sun  
Looked with the eye of love through the golden  
vapors around him ;  
While arrayed in its robes of russet and scarlet  
and yellow,  
Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glittering  
tree of the forest  
Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian adorned  
with mantles and jewels.

Now recommenced the reign of rest and affec-  
tion and stillness.  
Day with its burden and heat had departed, and  
twilight descending  
Brought back the evening star to the sky, and  
the herds to the homestead.  
Pawing the ground they came, and resting their  
necks on each other,

And with their nostrils distended inhaling the  
freshness of evening.  
Foremost bearing the bell, *Evangeline's* beautiful heifer,  
Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon  
that waved from her collar,  
Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious of  
human affection.  
Then came the shepherd back with his bleating  
flocks from the seaside,  
Where was their favorite pasture. Behind them  
followed the watch-dog,  
Patient, full of importance, and grand in the  
pride of his instinct,  
Walking from side to side with a lordly air, and  
superbly  
Waving his bushy tail, and urging forward the  
stragglers;  
Regent of flocks was he when the shepherd  
slept; their protector,  
When from the forest at night, through the  
starry silence, the wolves howled.  
Late, with the rising moon, returned the wains  
from the marshes,  
Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with its  
odor.  
Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on their  
manes and their fetlocks,  
While aloft on their shoulders the wooden and  
ponderous saddles,



Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned with  
tassels of crimson,  
Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks heavy  
with blossoms.  
Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and yielded  
their udders  
Unto the milkmaid's hand; whilst loud and in  
regular cadence  
Into the sounding pails the foaming streamlets  
descended.  
Lowing of cattle and peals of laughter were  
heard in the farm-yard,  
Echoed back by the barns. Anon they sank  
into stillness;  
Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the valves  
of the barn-doors,  
Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a season  
was silent.

In-doors, warm by the wide-mouthed fire-  
place, idly the farmer  
Sat in his elbow-chair, and watched how the  
flames and the smoke-wreaths  
Struggled together like foes in a burning city.  
Behind him,  
Nodding and mocking along the wall, with ges-  
tures fantastic,  
Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished  
away into darkness.

Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back of  
his arm-chair  
Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter  
plates on the dresser  
Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of  
armies the sunshine.  
Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols  
of Christmas,  
Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers  
before him  
Sang in their Norman orchards and bright Bur-  
gundian vineyards.  
Close at her father's side was the gentle Evan-  
geline seated,  
Spinning flax for the loom, that stood in the  
corner behind her.  
Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest was its  
diligent shuttle,  
While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like  
the drone of a bagpipe,  
Followed the old man's song, and united the  
fragments together.  
As in a church, when the chant of the choir at  
intervals ceases,  
Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of the  
priest at the altar,  
So, in each pause of the song, with measured  
motion the clock clicked.

Thus as they sat, there were footsteps heard,  
and, suddenly lifted,  
Sounded the wooden latch, and the door swung  
back on its hinges.  
Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it was  
Basil the blacksmith,  
And by her beating heart Evangeline knew who  
was with him.  
“Welcome!” the farmer exclaimed, as their  
footsteps paused on the threshold,  
“Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take thy  
place on the settle  
Close by the chimney-side, which is always  
empty without thee;  
Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and the  
box of tobacco;  
Never so much thyself art thou as when through  
the curling  
Smoke of the pipe or the forge thy friendly and  
jovial face gleams  
Round and red as the harvest moon through the  
mist of the marshes.”  
Then, with a smile of content, thus answered  
Basil the blacksmith,  
Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by the  
fireside:—  
“Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever thy jest  
and thy ballad!  
Ever in cheerfullest mood art thou, when others  
are filled with

Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin  
before them.

Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst picked  
up a horseshoe."

Pausing a moment, to take the pipe that Evan-  
ge<sup>line</sup> brought him,

And with a coal from the embers had lighted,  
he slowly continued: —

"Four days now are passed since the English  
ships at their anchors

Ride in the Gaspereau's mouth, with their can-  
non pointed against us.

What their design may be is unknown; but all  
are commanded

On the morrow to meet in the church, where his  
Majesty's mandate

Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas!  
in the mean time

Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the  
people."

Then made answer the farmer: — "Perhaps  
some friendlier purpose

Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps the  
harvests in England

By untimely rains or untimelier heat have been  
blighted,

And from our bursting barns they would feed  
their cattle and children."

"Not so thinketh the folk in the village," said,  
warmly, the blacksmith,

Shaking his head, as in doubt ; then, heaving a sigh, he continued : —

“ Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour, nor Port Royal.

Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk on its outskirts,

Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate of to-morrow.

Arms have been taken from us, and warlike weapons of all kinds ;

Nothing is left but the blacksmith's sledge and the scythe of the mower.”

Then with a pleasant smile made answer the jovial farmer : —

“ Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our flocks and our cornfields,

Safer within these peaceful dikes, besieged by the ocean,

Than our fathers in forts, besieged by the enemy's cannon.

Fear no evil, my friend, and to-night may no shadow of sorrow

Fall on this house and hearth ; for this is the night of the contract.

Built are the house and the barn. The merry lads of the village

Strongly have built them and well ; and, breaking the glebe round about them.

Filled the barn with hay, and the house with food for a twelvemonth.

René Leblanc will be here anon, with his papers  
and inkhorn.

Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the  
joy of our children?"

As apart by the window she stood, with her  
hand in her lover's,

Blushing Evangeline heard the words that her  
father had spoken,

And, as they died on his lips, the worthy notary  
entered.

## III.

BENT like a laboring oar, that toils in the surf  
of the ocean,

Bent, but not broken, by age was the form of  
the notary public;

Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of  
the maize, hung

Over his shoulders; his forehead was high; and  
glasses with horn bows

Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom  
supernal.

Father of twenty children was he, and more than  
a hundred

Children's children rode on his knee, and heard  
his great watch tick.

Four long years in the times of the war had he  
languished a captive,



Suffering much in an old French fort as the  
friend of the English.  
Now, though warier grown, without all guile or  
suspicion,  
Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient, and simple,  
and childlike.  
He was beloved by all, and most of all by the  
children;  
For he told them tales of the Loup-garou in the  
forest,  
And of the goblin that came in the night to  
water the horses,  
And of the white Létiche, the ghost of a child  
who unchristened  
Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen the  
chambers of children;  
And how on Christmas eve the oxen talked in  
the stable,  
And how the fever was cured by a spider shut  
up in a nutshell,  
And of the marvellous powers of four-leaved  
clover and horseshoes,  
With whatsoever else was writ in the lore of the  
village.  
Then up rose from his seat by the fireside Basil  
the blacksmith,  
Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly  
extending his right hand,  
"Father Leblanc," he exclaimed, "thou hast  
heard the talk in the village,

And, perchance, canst tell us some news of these  
ships and their errand."

Then with modest demeanor made answer the  
notary public, —

"Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet am  
never the wiser;

And what their errand may be I know not better  
than others.

Yet am I not of those who imagine some evil  
intention

Brings them here, for we are at peace; and why  
then molest us?"

"God's name!" shouted the hasty and some-  
what irascible blacksmith;

"Must we in all things look for the how, and  
the why, and the wherefore?

Daily injustice is done, and might is the right of  
the strongest!"

But, without heeding his warmth, continued the  
notary public, —

"Man is unjust, but God is just; and finally  
justice

Triumphs; and well I remember a story, that  
often consoled me,

When as a captive I lay in the old French fort  
at Port Royal."

This was the old man's favorite tale, and he  
loved to repeat it

When his neighbors complained that any injus-  
tice was done them.



“Once in an ancient city, whose name I no  
longer remember,  
Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of  
Justice  
Stood in the public square, upholding the scales  
in its left hand,  
And in its right a sword, as an emblem that  
justice presided  
Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and  
homes of the people.  
Even the birds had built their nests in the scales  
of the balance,  
Having no fear of the sword that flashed in the  
sunshine above them.  
But in the course of time the laws of the land  
were corrupted ;  
Might took the place of right, and the weak were  
oppressed, and the mighty  
Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced in a  
nobleman's palace  
That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere long  
a suspicion  
Fell on an orphan girl who lived as maid in the  
household.  
She, after form of trial condemned to die on  
the scaffold,  
Patiently met her doom at the foot of the statue  
of Justice.  
As to her Father in heaven her innocent spirit  
ascended,

Lo! o'er the city a tempest rose; and the bolts  
of the thunder  
Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in wrath  
from its left hand  
Down on the pavement below the clattering  
scales of the balance,  
And in the hollow thereof was found the nest of  
a magpie.  
Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of pearls  
was inwoven."  
Silenced, but not convinced, when the story was  
ended, the blacksmith  
Stood like a man who fain would speak, but  
findeth no language;  
All his thoughts were congealed into lines on  
his face, as the vapors  
Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes  
in the winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on  
the table,  
Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard  
with home-brewed  
Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength  
in the village of Grand-Pré;  
While from his pocket the notary drew his  
papers and inkhorn,  
Wrote with a steady hand the date and the age  
of the parties,

Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of  
sheep and in cattle. ✓

Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well  
were completed,

And the great seal of the law was set like a sun  
on the margin.

Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw  
on the table

Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces of  
silver;

And the notary rising, and blessing the bride  
and the bridegroom,

Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their  
welfare.

Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly  
bowed and departed,

While in silence the others sat and mused by  
the fireside,

Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out  
of its corner.

Soon was the game begun. In friendly conten-  
tion the old men

Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful ma-  
nœuvre,

Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach  
was made in the king-row.

Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a win-  
dow's embrasure,

Sat the lovers, and whispered together, behold-  
ing the moon rise

Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of the  
meadows.

Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of  
heaven,

Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots  
of the angels.

Thus was the evening passed. Anon the bell  
from the belfry

Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew,  
and straightway

Rose the guests and departed; and silence  
reigned in the household.

Many a farewell word and sweet good-night on  
the door-step

Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled  
it with gladness.

Carefully then were covered the embers that  
glowed on the hearth-stone,

And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of  
the farmer.

Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evange-  
line followed.

Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the  
darkness,

Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face  
of the maiden.

Silent she passed the hall, and entered the door  
of her chamber.



40

Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of  
white, and its clothes-press  
Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were  
carefully folded  
Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evan-  
geline woven.  
This was the precious dower she would bring to  
her husband in marriage,  
Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her  
skill as a housewife.  
Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow  
and radiant moonlight  
Streamed through the windows, and lighted the  
room, till the heart of the maiden  
Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremu-  
lous tides of the ocean.  
Ah! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as  
she stood with  
Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of  
her chamber!  
Little she dreamed that below, among the trees  
of the orchard,  
Waited her lover and watched for the gleam of  
her lamp and her shadow.  
Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a  
feeling of sadness  
Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of  
clouds in the moonlight  
Flitted across the floor and darkened the room  
for a moment.



And, as she gazed from the window, she saw  
serenely the moon pass  
Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star  
follow her footsteps,  
As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wan-  
dered with Hagar!

## IV.

PLEASANTLY rose next morn the sun on the vil-  
lage of Grand-Pré.  
Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the  
Basin of Minas,  
Where the ships, with their wavering shadows,  
were riding at anchor.  
Life had long been astir in the village, and clam-  
orous labor  
Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden  
gates of the morning.  
Now from the country around, from the farms  
and neighboring hamlets,  
Came in their holiday dresses the blithe Acadian  
peasants.  
Many a glad good-morrow and jocund laugh  
from the young folk  
Made the bright air brighter, as up from the nu-  
merous meadows,  
Where no path could be seen but the track of  
wheels in the greensward,



Group after group appeared, and joined, or  
passed on the highway.

Long ere noon, in the village all sounds of labor  
were silenced.

Thronged were the streets with people; and  
noisy groups at the house-doors

Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and gos-  
siped together.

Every house was an inn, where all were wel-  
comed and feasted;

For with this simple people, who lived like  
brothers together,

All things were held in common, and what one  
had was another's.

Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed  
more abundant:

For Evangeline stood among the guests of her  
father;

Bright was her face with smiles, and words of  
welcome and gladness

Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup  
as she gave it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of the  
orchard,

Stript of its golden fruit, was spread the feast of  
betrothal.

There in the shade of the porch were the priest  
and the notary seated;

There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil the  
blacksmith.

Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-press  
and the bee-hives,

Michael the fiddler was placed, with the gayest  
of hearts and of waistcoats.

Shadow and light from the leaves alternately  
played on his snow-white

Hair, as it waved in the wind; and the jolly face  
of the fiddler

Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are  
blown from the embers.

Gayly the old man sang to the vibrant sound of  
his fiddle,

*Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres*, and *Le Carillon  
de Dunkerque*,

And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to  
the music.

Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzy-  
ing dances

Under the orchard-trees and down the path to  
the meadows;

Old folk and young together, and children min-  
gled among them.

Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Bene-  
dict's daughter!

Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the  
blacksmith!

So passed the morning away. And lo! with  
a summons sonorous  
Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the  
meadows a drum beat.  
Thronged erelong was the church with men.  
Without, in the churchyard,  
Waited the women. They stood by the graves,  
and hung on the headstones  
Garlands of autumn-leaves and evergreens fresh  
from the forest.  
Then came the guard from the ships, and march-  
ing proudly among them  
Entered the sacred portal. With loud and disso-  
nant clangor  
Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from  
ceiling and casement, —  
Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponder-  
ous portal  
Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will  
of the soldiers.  
Then uprose their commander, and spake from  
the steps of the altar,  
Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the  
royal commission.  
“ You are convened this day,” he said, “ by his  
Majesty’s orders.  
Clement and kind has he been; but how you  
have answered his kindness,  
Let your own hearts reply! To my natural make  
and my temper

Painful the task is I do, which to you I know  
must be grievous.  
Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of  
our monarch ;  
Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and  
cattle of all kinds  
Forfeited be to the crown ; and that you your-  
selves from this province  
Be transported to other lands. God grant you  
may dwell there  
Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable  
people !  
Prisoners now I declare you ; for such is his  
Majesty's pleasure !"  
As, when the air is serene in the sultry solstice  
of summer,  
Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling  
of the hailstones  
Beats down the farmer's corn in the field and  
shatters his windows,  
Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with  
thatch from the house-roofs,  
Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break  
their enclosures ;  
So on the hearts of the people descended the  
words of the speaker.  
Silent a moment they stood in speechless won-  
der, and then rose  
Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and  
anger,

And, by one impulse moved, they madly rushed  
to the door-way.  
Vain was the hope of escape; and cries and  
fierce imprecations  
Rang through the house of prayer; and high  
o'er the heads of the others  
Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of Basil  
the blacksmith,  
As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by the  
billows.  
Flushed was his face and distorted with passion;  
and wildly he shouted, —  
“Down with the tyrants of England! we never  
have sworn them allegiance!  
Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on  
our homes and our harvests!”  
More he fain would have said, but the merciless  
hand of a soldier  
Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him  
down to the pavement.

In the midst of the strife and tumult of  
angry contention,  
Lo! the door of the chancel opened, and Father  
Felician  
Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the  
steps of the altar.  
Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he  
awed into silence

All that clamorous throng ; and thus he spake to  
his people ;

Deep were his tones and solemn ; in accents  
measured and mournful

Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum, dis-  
tinctly the clock strikes.

“ What is this that ye do, my children ? what  
madness has seized you ?

Forty years of my life have I labored among  
you, and taught you,

Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one  
another !

Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and  
prayers and privations ?

Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love  
and forgiveness ?

This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and  
would you profane it

Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing  
with hatred ?

Lo ! where the crucified Christ from his cross is  
gazing upon you !

See ! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness  
and holy compassion !

Hark ! how those lips still repeat the prayer,  
‘ O Father, forgive them ! ’

Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the  
wicked assail us,

Let us repeat it now, and say, ‘ O Father, for-  
give them ! ’ ”



Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the  
  hearts of his people  
Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded the  
  passionate outbreak,  
While they repeated his prayer, and said, "O  
  Father, forgive them!"

Then came the evening service. The tapers  
  gleamed from the altar.  
Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest,  
  and the people responded,  
Not with their lips alone, but their hearts; and  
  the Ave Maria  
Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their  
  souls, with devotion translated,  
Rose on the ardor of prayer, like Elijah ascend-  
  ing to heaven.

Meanwhile had spread in the village the tid-  
  ings of ill, and on all sides  
Wandered, wailing, from house to house the  
  women and children.  
Long at her father's door Evangeline stood,  
  with her right hand  
Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the  
  sun, that, descending,  
Lighted the village street with mysterious splen-  
  dor, and roofed each  
Peasant's cottage with golden thatch, and em-  
  blazoned its windows.

Long within had been spread the snow-white  
cloth on the table ;  
There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey  
fragrant with wild-flowers ;  
There stood the tankard of ale, and the cheese  
fresh brought from the dairy ;  
And, at the head of the board, the great arm-  
chair of the farmer.  
Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's door,  
as the sunset  
Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the broad  
ambrosial meadows.  
Ah ! on her spirit within a deeper shadow had  
fallen,  
And from the fields of her soul a fragrance  
celestial ascended, —  
Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and forgive-  
ness, and patience !  
Then, all-forgotten of self, she wandered into  
the village,  
Cheering with looks and words the mournful  
hearts of the women,  
As o'er the darkening fields with lingering steps  
they departed,  
Urged by their household cares, and the weary  
feet of their children.  
Down sank the great red sun, and in golden,  
glimmering vapors  
Veiled the light of his face, like a Prophet de-  
scending from Sinai. .



Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus  
sounded.

Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the church  
Evangeline lingered.  
All was silent within; and in vain at the door  
and the windows  
Stood she, and listened and looked, till, over-  
come by emotion,  
"Gabriel!" cried she aloud with tremulous  
voice; but no answer  
Came from the graves of the dead, nor the  
gloomier grave of the living.  
Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless  
house of her father.  
Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the board  
was the supper untasted,  
Empty and drear was each room, and haunted  
with phantoms of terror.  
Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor  
of her chamber.  
In the dead of the night she heard the disconso-  
late rain fall  
Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore-  
tree by the window.  
Keenly the lightning flashed; and the voice of  
the echoing thunder  
Told her that God was in heaven, and governed  
the world he created!

Then she remembered the tale she had heard of  
the justice of Heaven ;  
Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peace-  
fully slumbered till morning.

## V.

FOUR times the sun had risen and set ; and now  
on the fifth day  
Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids  
of the farm-house.  
Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mourn-  
ful procession,  
Came from the neighboring hamlets and farms  
the Acadian women,  
Driving in ponderous wains their household  
goods to the sea-shore,  
Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on  
their dwellings,  
Ere they were shut from sight by the winding  
road and the woodland.  
Close at their sides their children ran, and  
urged on the oxen,  
While in their little hands they clasped some  
fragments of playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried ;  
and there on the sea-beach

Piled in confusion lay the household goods of  
the peasants.

All day long between the shore and the ships  
did the boats ply ;

All day long the wains came laboring down  
from the village.

Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to  
his setting,

Echoed far o'er the fields came the roll of drums  
from the churchyard.

Thither the women and children thronged. On  
a sudden the church-doors

Opened, and forth came the guard, and march-  
ing in gloomy procession

Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient, Aca-  
dian farmers.

Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their  
homes and their country,

Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are  
weary and wayworn,

So with songs on their lips the Acadian peas-  
ants descended

Down from the church to the shore, amid their  
wives and their daughters.

Foremost the young men came ; and, raising  
together their voices,

Sang with tremulous lips a chant of the Catho-  
lic Missions : —

“ Sacred heart of the Saviour ! O inexhaustible  
fountain !

Fill our hearts this day with strength and submission and patience!"

Then the old men, as they marched, and the women that stood by the wayside  
Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in the sunshine above them  
Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of spirits departed.

Half-way down to the shore Evangeline  
waited in silence,  
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of affliction, —  
Calmly and sadly she waited, until the procession approached her,  
And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.  
Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to meet him,  
Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder, and whispered, —  
" Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we love one another  
Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances may happen!"  
Smiling she spake these words; then suddenly paused, for her father  
Saw she slowly advancing. Alas! how changed was his aspect!



Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire  
from his eye, and his footstep  
Heavier seemed with the weight of the heavy  
heart in his bosom.  
But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his  
neck and embraced him,  
Speaking words of endearment where words of  
comfort availed not.  
Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved on that  
mournful procession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and  
stir of embarking.  
Busily plied the freighted boats ; and in the con-  
fusion  
Wives were torn from their husbands, and  
mothers, too late, saw their children  
Left on the land, extending their arms, with  
wildest entreaties.  
So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel  
carried.  
While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood  
with her father.  
Half the task was not done when the sun went  
down, and the twilight  
Deepened and darkened around ; and in haste  
the reflux ocean  
Fled away from the shore, and left the line of the  
sand-beach

Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the  
slippery sea-weed.

Farther back in the midst of the household goods  
and the wagons,

Like to a gypsy camp, or a leaguer after a battle,  
All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels  
near them,

Lay encamped for the night the houseless Aca-  
dian farmers.

Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bel-  
lowing ocean,

Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles,  
and leaving

Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats  
of the sailors.

Then, as the night descended, the herds returned  
from their pastures ;

Sweet was the moist still air with the odor of  
milk from their udders ;

Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known  
bars of the farm-yard, —

Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the  
hand of the milkmaid,

Silence reigned in the streets ; from the church  
no Angelus sounded,

Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed no  
lights from the windows.

But on the shores meanwhile the evening fires  
had been kindled,

Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands  
from wrecks in the tempest.

Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful  
faces were gathered,

Voices of women were heard, and of men, and  
the crying of children.

Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to  
hearth in his parish,

Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and  
blessing and cheering,

Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's desolate  
sea-shore.

Thus he approached the place where Evangeline  
sat with her father,

And in the flickering light beheld the face of the  
old man,

Haggard and hollow and wan, and without either  
thought or emotion,

E'en as the face of a clock from which the hands  
have been taken.

Vainly Evangeline strove with words and caresses  
to cheer him,

Vainly offered him food; yet he moved not, he  
looked not, he spake not,

But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the flick-  
ering fire-light.

"*Benedicite!*" murmured the priest, in tones of  
compassion.

More he fain would have said, but his heart was  
full, and his accents

Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet of a  
child on a threshold,  
Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the awful  
presence of sorrow.  
Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the head  
of the maiden,  
Raising his tearful eyes to the silent stars that  
above them  
Moved on their way, unperturbed by the wrongs  
and sorrows of mortals.  
Then sat he down at her side, and they wept  
together in silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in  
autumn the blood-red  
Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and  
o'er the horizon  
Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon  
mountain and meadow,  
Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and piling huge  
shadows together.  
Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the roofs  
of the village,  
Gleamed on the sky and the sea, and the ships  
that lay in the roadstead.  
Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes  
of flame were  
Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, like  
the quivering hands of a martyr.



Then as the wind seized the gleeds and the burning  
thatch, and, uplifting,  
Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from  
a hundred house-tops  
Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flame  
intermingled.

These things beheld in dismay the crowd on the  
shore and on shipboard.

Speechless at first they stood, then cried aloud  
in their anguish,

"We shall behold no more our homes in the  
village of Grand-Pré!"

Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow in  
the farm-yards,

Thinking the day had dawned; and anon the  
lowing of cattle

Came on the evening breeze, by the barking of  
dogs interrupted.

Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles the  
sleeping encampments

Far in the western prairies or forests that skirt  
the Nebraska,

When the wild horses affrighted sweep by with  
the speed of the whirlwind,

Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes rush to  
the river.

Such was the sound that arose on the night, as  
the herds and the horses

Broke through their folds and fences, and madly  
rushed o'er the meadows

Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless,  
the priest and the maiden  
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and  
widened before them;  
And as they turned at length to speak to their  
silent companion,  
Lo! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched  
abroad on the sea-shore  
Motionless lay his form, from which the soul had  
departed.  
Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and  
the maiden  
Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud in  
her terror.  
Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her  
head on his bosom.  
Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious  
slumber;  
And when she woke from the trance, she beheld  
a multitude near her.  
Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully  
gazing upon her,  
Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest  
compassion.  
Still the blaze of the burning village illumined  
the landscape,  
Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the  
faces around her,  
And like the day of doom it seemed to her wav-  
ering senses.

Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the people, —

“Let us bury him here by the sea. When a happier season

Brings us again to our homes from the unknown land of our exile,

Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the churchyard.”

Such were the words of the priest. And there in haste by the sea-side,

Having the glare of the burning village for funeral torches,

But without bell or book, they buried the farmer of Grand-Pré.

And as the voice of the priest repeated the service of sorrow,

Lo! with a mournful sound, like the voice of a vast congregation,

Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar with the dirges.

’Twas the returning tide, that afar from the waste of the ocean,

With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and hurrying landward.

Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of embarking;

And with the ebb of the tide the ships sailed out of the harbor,

Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and the village in ruins.

## PART THE SECOND.

## I.

MANY a weary year had passed since the burning of Grand-Pré,  
When on the falling tide the freighted vessels departed,  
Bearing a nation, with all its household gods,  
into exile,  
Exile without an end, and without an example  
in story.  
Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians  
landed ;  
Scattered were they, like flakes of snow, when  
the wind from the northeast  
Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the  
Banks of Newfoundland.  
Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wandered  
from city to city,  
From the cold lakes of the North to sultry Southern  
savannas, —  
From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands  
where the Father of Waters  
Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them  
down to the ocean,

Deep in their sands to bury the scattered bones  
of the mammoth.  
Friends they sought and homes ; and many, de-  
spairing, heart-broken,  
Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer a  
friend nor a fireside.  
Written their history stands on tablets of stone  
in the churchyards.  
Long among them was seen a maiden who waited  
and wandered,  
Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering  
all things.  
Fair was she and young ; but, alas ! before her  
extended,  
Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of life,  
with its pathway  
Marked by the graves of those who had sorrowed  
and suffered before her,  
Passions long extinguished, and hopes long dead  
and abandoned,  
As the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert  
is marked by  
Camp-fires long consumed, and bones that bleach  
in the sunshine.  
Something there was in her life incomplete, im-  
perfect, unfinished ;  
As if a morning of June, with all its music and  
sunshine,  
Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading, slowly  
descended

Into the east again, from whence it late had  
arisen.

Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by  
the fever within her,

Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and  
thirst of the spirit,

She would commence again her endless search  
and endeavor ;

Sometimes in churchyards strayed, and gazed on  
the crosses and tombstones,

Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that  
perhaps in its bosom

He was already at rest, and she longed to slumber  
beside him.

Sometimes a rumor, a hearsay, an inarticulate  
whisper,

Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her  
forward.

Sometimes she spake with those who had seen  
her beloved and known him,

But it was long ago, in some far-off place or  
forgotten.

"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" they said; "O yes! we  
have seen him.

He was with Basil the blacksmith, and both have  
gone to the prairies;

Coureurs-des-Bois are they, and famous hunters  
and trappers."

"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" said others; "O yes!  
we have seen him.

He is a Voyageur in the lowlands of Louisiana."  
Then would they say, "Dear child ! why dream  
and wait for him longer ?

Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel ?  
others

Who have hearts as tender and true, and spirits  
as loyal ?

Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary's son, who  
has loved thee

Many a tedious year ; come, give him thy hand  
and be happy !

Thou art too fair to be left to braid St. Cath-  
erine's tresses."

Then would Evangeline answer, serenely but  
sadly, "I cannot !

Whither my heart has gone, there follows my  
hand, and not elsewhere.

For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and  
illumines the pathway,

Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden  
in darkness."

Thereupon the priest, her friend and father-  
confessor,

Said, with a smile, "O daughter ! thy God thus  
speaketh within thee !

Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was  
wasted ;

If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters,  
returning



Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them  
full of refreshment ;

That which the fountain sends forth returns again  
to the fountain.

Patience ; accomplish thy labor ; accomplish thy  
work of affection !

Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance  
is godlike.

Therefore accomplish thy labor of love, till the  
heart is made godlike,

Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered  
more worthy of heaven ! ”

Cheered by the good man's words, Evangeline  
labored and waited.

Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of  
the ocean,

But with its sound there was mingled a voice that  
whispered, “ Despair not ! ”

Thus did that poor soul wander in want and  
cheerless discomfort,

Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and thorns  
of existence.

Let me essay, O Muse ! to follow the wanderer's  
footsteps ; —

Not through each devious path, each changeful  
year of existence ;

But as a traveller follows a streamlet's course  
through the valley :

Far from its margin at times, and seeing the  
gleam of its water



Here and there, in some open space, and at intervals only ;  
Then drawing nearer its banks, through sylvan glooms that conceal it,  
Though he behold it not, he can hear its continuous murmur ;  
Happy, at length, if he find the spot where it reaches an outlet.

## II.

It was the month of May. Far down the Beautiful River,  
Past the Ohio shore and past the mouth of the Wabash,  
Into the golden stream of the broad and swift Mississippi,  
Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed by Acadian boatmen.  
It was a band of exiles ; a raft, as it were, from the shipwrecked  
Nation, scattered along the coast, now floating together,  
Bound by the bonds of a common belief and a common misfortune ;  
Men and women and children, who, guided by hope or by hearsay,  
Sought for their kith and their kin among the few-acred farmers

On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of fair  
Opelousas.

With them Evangeline went, and her guide, the  
Father Felician.

Onward o'er sunken sands, through a wilderness  
sombre with forests,

Day after day they glided adown the turbulent  
river;

Night after night, by their blazing fires, encamped  
on its borders.

Now through rushing chutes, among green islands,  
where plumelike

Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests, they  
swept with the current,

Then emerged into broad lagoons, where silvery  
sand-bars

Lay in the stream, and along the wimpling waves  
of their margin,

Shining with snow-white plumes, large flocks of  
pelicans waded.

Level the landscape grew, and along the shores  
of the river,

Shaded by china-trees, in the midst of luxuriant  
gardens,

Stood the houses of planters, with negro-cabins  
and dove-cots.

They were approaching the region where reigns  
perpetual summer,

Where through the Golden Coast, and groves of  
orange and citron,

Sweeps with majestic curve the river away to the eastward.

They, too, swerved from their course ; and, entering the Bayou of Plaquemine,

Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and devious waters,

Which, like a network of steel, extended in every direction.

Over their heads the towering and tenebrous boughs of the cypress

Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses in mid-air

Waved like banners that hang on the walls of ancient cathedrals.

Deathlike the silence seemed, and unbroken, save by the herons

Home to their roosts in the cedar-trees returning at sunset,

Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with demoniac laughter.

Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced and gleamed on the water,

Gleamed on the columns of cypress and cedar sustaining the arches,

Down through whose broken vaults it fell as through chinks in a ruin.

Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange were all things around them ;

And o'er their spirits there came a feeling of wonder and sadness, —

Strange forebodings of ill, unseen that cannot be  
compassed.

As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf of  
the prairies,

Far in advance are closed the leaves of the  
shrinking mimosa,

So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad forebod-  
ings of evil,

Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke of  
doom has attained it.

But Evangeline's heart was sustained by a vision,  
that faintly

Floated before her eyes, and beckoned her on  
through the moonlight.

It was the thought of her brain that assumed the  
shape of a phantom.

Through those shadowy isles had Gabriel wander-  
ed before her,

And every stroke of the oar now brought him  
nearer and nearer.

Then in his place, at the prow of the boat,  
rose one of the oarsmen,

And, as a signal sound, if others like them per-  
adventure,

Sailed on those gloomy and midnight streams,  
blew a blast on his bugle.

Wild through the dark colonnades and corridors  
leafy the blast rang,

Breaking the seal of silence, and giving tongues  
to the forest.

Soundless above them the banners of moss just  
stirred to the music.

Multitudinous echoes awoke and died in the  
distance,

Over the watery floor, and beneath the reverber-  
ant branches ;

But not a voice replied ; no answer came from  
the darkness ;

And, when the echoes had ceased, like a sense  
of pain was the silence.

Then Evangeline slept ; but the boatmen rowed  
through the midnight,

Silent at times, then singing familiar Canadian  
boat-songs,

Such as they sang of old on their own Acadian  
rivers,

While through the night were heard the myste-  
rious sounds of the desert,

Far off, — indistinct, — as of wave or wind in the  
forest,

Mixed with the whoop of the crane and the roar  
of the grim alligator.

Thus ere another noon they emerged from the  
shades ; and before them

Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the Atchafa-  
laya.



Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight  
undulations  
Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent in  
beauty, the lotus  
Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the  
boatmen.  
Faint was the air with the odorous breath of  
magnolia blossoms,  
And with the heat of noon; and numberless  
sylvan islands,  
Fragrant and thickly embowered with blossoming  
hedges of roses,  
Near to whose shores they glided along, invited  
to slumber.  
Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were  
suspended.  
Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that grew  
by the margin,  
Safely their boat was moored; and scattered  
about on the greensward,  
Tired with their midnight toil, the weary trav-  
ellers slumbered.  
Over them vast and high extended the cope of a  
cedar.  
Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet-flower  
and the grapevine  
Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder  
of Jacob,  
On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending,  
descending,

Were the swift humming-birds, that flitted from  
blossom to blossom.  
Such was the vision Evangeline saw as she slum-  
bered beneath it.  
Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn of  
an opening heaven  
Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of regions  
celestial.

Nearer, ever nearer, among the numberless  
islands,  
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er  
the water,  
Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of  
hunters and trappers.  
Northward its prow was turned, to the land of  
the bison and beaver.  
At the helm sat a youth, with countenance  
thoughtful and careworn.  
Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his brow,  
and a sadness  
Somewhat beyond his years on his face was legi-  
bly written.  
Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting, unhappy  
and restless,  
Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of self and  
of sorrow.  
Swiftly they glided along, close under the lee of  
the island,



But by the opposite bank, and behind a screen  
of palmettos,  
So that they saw not the boat, where it lay concealed in the willows,  
All undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and unseen, were the sleepers,  
Angel of God was there none to awaken the slumbering maiden.  
Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a cloud on the prairie.  
After the sound of their oars on the tholes had died in the distance,  
As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke, and the maiden  
Said with a sigh to the friendly priest, "O Father Felician!  
Something says in my heart that near me Gabriel wanders.  
Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague superstition?  
Or has an angel passed, and revealed the truth to my spirit?"  
Then, with a blush, she added, "Alas for my credulous fancy!  
Unto ears like thine such words as these have no meaning."  
But made answer the reverend man, and he smiled as he answered, —  
"Daughter, thy words are not idle; nor are they to me without meaning.

Feeling is deep and still ; and the word that floats  
on the surface  
Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where the  
anchor is hidden.  
Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the  
world calls illusions.  
Gabriel truly is near thee ; for not far away to  
the southward,  
On the banks of the Tèche, are the towns of St.  
Maur and St. Martin.  
There the long-wandering bride shall be given  
again to her bridegroom,  
There the long-absent pastor regain his flock and  
his sheepfold.  
Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and forests  
of fruit-trees ;  
Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the bluest  
of heavens  
Bending above, and resting its dome on the walls  
of the forest.  
They who dwell there have named it the Eden  
of Louisiana."

With these words of cheer they arose and con-  
tinued their journey.  
Softly the evening came. The sun from the  
western horizon  
Like a magician extended his golden wand o'er  
the landscape

Twinkling vapors arose ; and sky and water and  
forest

Seemed all on fire at the touch, and melted and  
mingled together.

Hanging between two skies, a cloud with edges  
of silver,

Floated the boat, with its dripping oars, on the  
motionless water.

Filled was Evangeline's heart with inexpressible  
sweetness.

Touched by the magic spell, the sacred fountains  
of feeling

Glowed with the light of love, as the skies and  
waters around her.

Then from a neighboring thicket the mocking-  
bird, wildest of singers,

Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er  
the water,

Shook from his little throat such floods of deliri-  
ous music,

That the whole air and the woods and the  
waves seemed silent to listen.

Plaintive at first were the tones and sad ; then  
soaring to madness

Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of fren-  
zied Bacchantes.

Single notes were then heard, in sorrowful, low  
lamentation ;

Till, having gathered them all, he flung them  
abroad in derision,

As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through  
the tree-tops  
Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal  
shower on the branches.  
With such a prelude as this, and hearts that  
throbbled with emotion,  
Slowly they entered the Tèche, where it flows  
through the green Opelousas,  
And, through the amber air, above the crest of  
woodland,  
Saw the column of smoke that arose from a  
neighboring dwelling; —  
Sounds of a horn they heard, and the distant  
lowing of cattle.

## III.

NEAR to the bank of the river, o'ershadowed by  
oaks, from whose branches  
Garlands of Spanish moss and of mystic mis-  
tletoe flaunted,  
Such as the Druids cut down with golden  
hatchets at Yule-tide,  
Stood, secluded and still, the house of the  
herdsman. A garden  
Girded it round about with a belt of luxuriant  
blossoms,  
Filling the air with fragrance. The house itself  
was of timbers



Hewn from the cypress-tree, and carefully fitted together.

Large and low was the roof; and on slender columns supported,

Rose-wreathed, vine-encircled, a broad and spacious veranda,

Haunt of the humming-bird and the bee, extended around it.

At each end of the house, amid the flowers of the garden,

Stationed the dove-cots were, as love's perpetual symbol,

Scenes of endless wooing, and endless contentions of rivals.

Silence reigned o'er the place. The line of shadow and sunshine

Ran near the tops of the trees; but the house itself was in shadow,

And from its chimney-top, ascending and slowly expanding

Into the evening air, a thin blue column of smoke rose.

In the rear of the house, from the garden gate, ran a pathway

Through the great groves of oak to the skirts of the limitless prairie,

Into whose sea of flowers the sun was slowly descending.

Full in his track of light, like ships with shadowy canvas

Hanging loose from their spars in a motionless  
calm in the tropics,  
Stood a cluster of trees, with tangled cordage of  
grapevines.

Just where the woodlands met the flowery surf  
of the prairie,  
Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish saddle  
and stirrups,  
Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and doublet  
of deerskin.  
Broad and brown was the face that from under  
the Spanish sombrero  
Gazed on the peaceful scene, with the lordly  
look of its master.  
Round about him were numberless herds of  
kine, that were grazing  
Quietly in the meadows, and breathing the  
vapory freshness  
That uprose from the river, and spread itself  
over the landscape.  
Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his side,  
and expanding  
Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a blast,  
that resounded  
Wildly and sweet and far, through the still damp  
air of the evening.  
Suddenly out of the grass the long white horns  
of the cattle

Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents  
of ocean.

Silent a moment they gazed, then bellowing  
rushed o'er the prairie,

And the whole mass became a cloud, a shade in  
the distance.

Then, as the herdsman turned to the house,  
through the gate of the garden

Saw he the forms of the priest and the maiden  
advancing to meet him.

Suddenly down from his horse he sprang in  
amazement, and forward

Rushed with extended arms and exclamations of  
wonder;

When they beheld his face, they recognized  
Basil the blacksmith.

Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests to  
the garden.

There in an arbor of roses with endless ques-  
tion and answer

Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed  
their friendly embraces,

Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent  
and thoughtful.

Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not; and now  
dark doubts and misgivings

Stole o'er the maiden's heart; and Basil, some-  
what embarrassed,

Broke the silence and said, "If you came by  
the Atchafalaya,





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How have you nowhere encountered my Gabriel's boat on the bayous?"

Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil a shade passed.

Tears came into her eyes, and she said, with a tremulous accent,

"Gone? is Gabriel gone?" and, concealing her face on his shoulder,

All her o'erburdened heart gave way, and she wept and lamented.

Then the good Basil said, — and his voice grew blithe as he said it, —

"Be of good cheer, my child; it is only to-day he departed.

Foolish boy! he has left me alone with my herds and my horses.

Moody and restless grown, and tried and troubled, his spirit

Could no longer endure the calm of this quiet existence.

Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and sorrowful ever,

Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and his troubles,

He at length had become so tedious to men and to maidens,

Tedious even to me, that at length I bethought me, and sent him

Unto the town of Adayes to trade for mules with the Spaniards.

Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the  
Ozark Mountains,  
Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers trap-  
ping the beaver.  
Therefore be of good cheer ; we will follow the  
fugitive lover ;  
He is not far on his way, and the Fates and the  
streams are against him.  
Up and away to-morrow, and through the red  
dew of the morning  
We will follow him fast, and bring him back to  
his prison."

Then glad voices were heard, and up from  
the banks of the river,  
Borne aloft on his comrades' arms, came Michael  
the fiddler.  
Long under Basil's roof had he lived like a god  
on Olympus,  
Having no other care than dispensing music to  
mortals.  
Far renowned was he for his silver locks and  
his fiddle.  
"Long live Michael," they cried, "our brave  
Acadian minstrel!"  
As they bore him aloft in triumphal procession ;  
and straightway  
Father Felician advanced with Evangeline,  
greeting the old man

Kindly and oft, and recalling the past, while  
Basil, enraptured,  
Hailed with hilarious joy his old companions  
and gossips,  
Laughing loud and long, and embracing mothers  
and daughters.  
Much they marvelled to see the wealth of the  
cidevant blacksmith,  
All his domains and his herds, and his patriarchal  
demeanor;  
Much they marvelled to hear his tales of the  
soil and the climate,  
And of the prairies, whose numberless herds  
were his who would take them;  
Each one thought in his heart, that he, too,  
would go and do likewise.  
Thus they ascended the steps, and, crossing the  
breezy veranda,  
Entered the hall of the house, where already  
the supper of Basil  
Waited his late return; and they rested and  
feasted together.

Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness  
descended.  
All was silent without, and, illuming the landscape  
with silver,  
Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad stars;  
but within doors,

Brighter than these, shone the faces of friends  
in the glimmering lamplight.

Then from his station aloft, at the head of the  
table, the herdsman

Poured forth his heart and his wine together in  
endless profusion.

Lighting his pipe, that was filled with sweet  
Natchitoches tobacco,

Thus he spake to his guests, who listened, and  
smiled as they listened:—

“Welcome once more, my friends, who long  
have been friendless and homeless,

Welcome once more to a home, that is better  
perchance than the old one!

Here no hungry winter congeals our blood like  
the rivers;

Here no stony ground provokes the wrath of the  
farmer.

Smoothly the ploughshare runs through the soil,  
as a keel through the water.

All the year round the orange-groves are in blos-  
som; and grass grows

More in a single night than a whole Canadian  
summer.

Here, too, numberless herds run wild and un-  
claimed in the prairies;

Here, too, lands may be had for the asking, and  
forests of timber

With a few blows of the axe are hewn and  
framed into houses.

After your houses are built, and your fields are  
yellow with harvests,  
No King George of England shall drive you  
away from your homesteads,  
Burning your dwellings and barns, and stealing  
your farms and your cattle.”  
Speaking these words, he blew a wrathful cloud  
from his nostrils.  
While his huge, brown hand came thundering  
down on the table,  
So that the guests all started ; and Father Feli-  
cian, astounded,  
Suddenly paused, with a pinch of snuff half-way  
to his nostrils.  
But the brave Basil resumed, and his words were  
milder and gayer : —  
“ Only beware of the fever, my friends, beware  
of the fever !  
For it is not like that of our cold Acadian cli-  
mate,  
Cured by wearing a spider hung round one’s  
neck in a nutshell ! ”  
Then there were voices heard at the door, and  
footsteps approaching  
Sounded upon the stairs and the floor of the  
breezy veranda.  
It was the neighboring Creoles and small Aca-  
dian planters,  
Who had been summoned all to the house of  
Basil the Herdsman.



Merry the meeting was of ancient comrades and  
neighbors :  
Friend clasped friend in his arms ; and they who  
before were as strangers,  
Meeting in exile, became straightway as friends  
to each other,  
Drawn by the gentle bond of a common country  
together.  
But in the neighboring hall a strain of music,  
proceeding  
From the accordant strings of Michael's melodious  
fiddle,  
Broke up all further speech. Away, like children  
delighted,  
All things forgotten besides, they gave themselves  
to the maddening  
Whirl of the dizzy dance, as it swept and swayed  
to the music.  
Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the rush of  
fluttering garments.

Meanwhile, apart, at the head of the hall, the  
priest and the herdsman  
Sat, conversing together of past and present and  
future ;  
While Evangeline stood like one entranced, for  
within her  
Olden memories rose, and loud in the midst of  
the music

Heard she the sound of the sea, and an irrepressible sadness  
Came o'er her heart, and unseen she stole forth into the garden.  
Beautiful was the night. Behind the black wall of the forest,  
Tipping its summit with silver, arose the moon.  
On the river  
Fell here and there through the branches a tremulous gleam of the moonlight,  
Like the sweet thoughts of love on a darkened and devious spirit.  
Nearer and round about her, the manifold flowers of the garden  
Poured out their souls in odors, that were their prayers and confessions  
Unto the night, as it went its way, like a silent Carthusian.  
Fuller of fragrance than they, and as heavy with shadows and night-dews,  
Hung the heart of the maiden. The calm and the magical moonlight  
Seemed to inundate her soul with indefinable longings,  
As, through the garden gate, and beneath the shade of the oak-trees,  
Passed she along the path to the edge of the measureless prairie.  
Silent it lay, with a silvery haze upon it, and fire-flies

Gleaming and floating away in mingled and infinite numbers.

Over her head the stars, the thoughts of God in the heavens,

Shone on the eyes of man, who had ceased to marvel and worship,

Save when a blazing comet was seen on the walls of that temple,

As if a hand had appeared and written upon them, "Upharsin."

And the soul of the maiden, between the stars and the fire-flies,

Wandered alone, and she cried, "O Gabriel! O my beloved!

Art thou so near unto me, and yet I cannot behold thee?

Art thou so near unto me, and yet thy voice does not reach me?

Ah! how often thy feet have trod this path to the prairie!

Ah! how often thine eyes have looked on the woodlands around me!

Ah! how often beneath this oak, returning from labor,

Thou hast lain down to rest, and to dream of me in thy slumbers!

When shall these eyes behold, these arms be folded about thee?"

Loud and sudden and near the note of a whip-poorwill sounded

Like a flute in the woods; and anon, through  
the neighboring thickets,  
Farther and farther away it floated and dropped  
into silence.

"Patience!" whispered the oaks from oracular  
caverns of darkness:  
And, from the moonlit meadow, a sigh re-  
sponded, "To-morrow!"

Bright rose the sun next day; and all the  
flowers of the garden  
Bathed his shining feet with their tears, and  
anointed his tresses  
With the delicious balm that they bore in their  
vases of crystal.

"Farewell!" said the priest, as he stood at the  
shadowy threshold;

"See that you bring us the Prodigal Son from  
his fasting and famine,  
And, too, the Foolish Virgin, who slept when  
the bridegroom was coming."

"Farewell!" answered the maiden, and, smiling,  
with Basil descended  
Down to the river's brink, where the boatmen  
already were waiting.

Thus beginning their journey with morning, and  
sunshine, and gladness,  
Swiftly they followed the flight of him who was  
speeding before them,

Blown by the blast of fate like a dead leaf over  
the desert.  
Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the day that  
succeeded,  
Found they trace of his course, in lake or forest  
or river,  
Nor, after many days, had they found him ; but  
vague and uncertain  
Rumors alone were their guides through a wild  
and desolate country ;  
Till, at the little inn of the Spanish town of  
Adayes,  
Weary and worn, they alighted, and learned from  
the garrulous landlord,  
That on the day before, with horses and guides  
and companions,  
Gabriel left the village, and took the road of the  
prairies.

## IV.

FAR in the West there lies a desert land, where  
the mountains  
Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and  
luminous summits.  
Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where  
the gorge, like a gateway,  
Opens a passing rude to the wheels of the emi-  
grant's wagon,



Westward the Oregon flows and the Walleway  
and Owyhee.

Eastward, with devious course, among the Wind-  
river Mountains,

Through the Sweet-water Valley precipitate leaps  
the Nebraska ;

And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-bout and  
the Spanish sierras,

Fretted with sands and rocks, and swept by the  
wind of the desert,

Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound, de-  
scend to the ocean,

Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and  
solemn vibrations.

Spreading between these streams are the won-  
drous, beautiful prairies,

Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and  
sunshine,

Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and pur-  
ple amorphas.

Over them wandered the buffalo herds, and the  
elk and the roebuck ;

Over them wandered the wolves, and herds of  
riderless horses

Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are  
weary with travel ;

Over them wander the scattered tribes of Ish-  
mael's children,

Staining the desert with blood ; and above their  
terrible war-trails

Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic, the  
vulture,

Like the implacable soul of a chieftain slaugh-  
tered in battle,

By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the  
heavens.

Here and there rise smokes from the camps of  
these savage marauders ;

Here and there rise groves from the margins of  
swift-running rivers ;

And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk  
of the desert,

Climbs down their dark ravines to dig for roots  
by the brook-side,

And over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline  
heaven,

Like the protecting hand of God inverted above  
them.

Into this wonderful land, at the base of the  
Ozark Mountains,

Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and trap-  
pers behind him.

Day after day, with their Indian guides, the  
maiden and Basil

Followed his flying steps, and thought each day  
to o'ertake him.

Sometimes they saw, or thought they saw, the  
smoke of his camp-fire

Rise in the morning air from the distant plain ;  
but at nightfall,



When they had reached the place, they found  
only embers and ashes.  
And, though their hearts were sad at times and  
their bodies were weary,  
Hope still guided them on, as the magic Fata  
Morgana  
Showed them her lakes of light, that retreated  
and vanished before them.

Once, as they sat by their evening fire, there  
silently entered  
Into the little camp an Indian woman, whose  
features  
Wore deep traces of sorrow, and patience as  
great as her sorrow.  
She was a Shawnee woman returning home to  
her people,  
From the far-off hunting-grounds of the cruel  
Camanches,  
Where her Canadian husband, a Coureur-des-  
Bois, had been murdered.  
Touched were their hearts at her story, and  
warmest and friendliest welcome  
Gave they, with words of cheer, and she sat and  
feasted among them  
On the buffalo-meat and the venison cooked on  
the embers.  
But when their meal was done, and Basil and  
all his companions,

Worn with the long day's march and the chase  
of the deer and the bison,  
Stretched themselves on the ground, and slept  
where the quivering fire-light  
Flashed on their swarthy cheeks, and their forms  
wrapped up in their blankets,  
Then at the door of Evangeline's tent she sat  
and repeated  
Slowly, with soft, low voice, and the charm of  
her Indian accent,  
All the tale of her love, with its pleasures, and  
pains, and reverses.  
Much Evangeline wept at the tale, and to know  
that another  
Hapless heart like her own had loved and had  
been disappointed.  
Moved to the depths of her soul by pity and  
woman's compassion,  
Yet in her sorrow pleased that one who had  
suffered was near her,  
She in turn related her love and all its disasters.  
Mute with wonder the Shawnee sat, and when  
she had ended  
Still was mute ; but at length, as if a mysterious  
horror  
Passed through her brain, she spake, and re-  
peated the tale of the Mowis ;  
Mowis, the bridegroom of snow, who won and  
wedded a maiden,

But, when the morning came, arose and passed  
from the wigwam,  
Fading and melting away and dissolving into  
the sunshine,  
Till she beheld him no more, though she fol-  
lowed far into the forest.  
Then, in those sweet, low tones, that seemed  
like a weird incantation,  
Told she the tale of the fair Lilinau, who was  
wooed by a phantom,  
That, through the pines, o'er her father's lodge,  
in the hush of the twilight,  
Breathed like the evening wind, and whispered  
love to the maiden,  
Till she followed his green and waving plume  
through the forest,  
And nevermore returned, nor was seen again by  
her people.  
Silent with wonder and strange surprise, Evan-  
geline listened  
To the soft flow of her magical words, till the  
region around her  
Seemed like enchanted ground, and her swarthy  
guest the enchantress.  
Slowly over the tops of the Ozark Mountains  
the moon rose,  
Lighting the little tent, and with a mysterious  
splendor  
Touching the sombre leaves, and embracing and  
filling the woodland.

With a delicious sound the brook rushed by, and  
the branches

Swayed and sighed overhead in scarcely audible  
whispers.

Filled with the thoughts of love was Evange-  
line's heart, but a secret,

Subtile sense crept in of pain and indefinite  
terror,

As the cold, poisonous snake creeps into the  
nest of the swallow.

It was no earthly fear. A breath from the region  
of spirits

Seemed to float in the air of night ; and she felt  
for a moment

That, like the Indian maid, she, too, was pursu-  
ing a phantom.

With this thought she slept, and the fear and  
the phantom had vanished.

Early upon the morrow the march was re-  
sumed ; and the Shawnee

Said, as they journeyed along, " On the western  
slope of these mountains

Dwells in his little village the Black Robe chief  
of the Mission.

Much he teaches the people, and tells them of  
Mary and Jesus ;

Loud laugh their hearts with joy, and weep with  
pain, as they hear him."

Then, with a sudden and secret emotion, Evangeline answered,

“Let us go to the Mission, for there good tidings await us!”

Thither they turned their steeds; and behind a spur of the mountains,

Just as the sun went down, they heard a murmur of voices,

And in a meadow green and broad, by the bank of a river,

Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents of the Jesuit Mission.

Under a towering oak, that stood in the midst of the village,

Knelt the Black Robe chief with his children. A crucifix fastened

High on the trunk of the tree, and overshadowed by grapevines,

Looked with its agonized face on the multitude kneeling beneath it.

This was their rural chapel. Aloft, through the intricate arches

Of its ærial roof, arose the chant of their vespers,

Mingling its notes with the soft susurrus and sighs of the branches.

Silent, with heads uncovered, the travellers, nearer approaching,

Knelt on the swarded floor, and joined in the evening devotions,

But when the service was done, and the benediction had fallen

Forth from the hands of the priest, like seed  
from the hands of the sower,

Slowly the reverend man advanced to the strangers, and bade them

Welcome; and when they replied, he smiled  
with benignant expression,

Hearing the homelike sounds of his mother-tongue in the forest,

And, with words of kindness, conducted them  
into his wigwam.

There upon mats and skins they reposed, and  
on cakes of the maize-ear

Feasted, and slaked their thirst from the water-gourd of the teacher.

Soon was their story told; and the priest with  
solemnity answered: —

“Not six suns have risen and set since Gabriel,  
seated

On this mat by my side, where now the maiden  
reposes,

Told me this same sad tale; then arose and  
continued his journey!”

Soft was the voice of the priest, and he spake  
with an accent of kindness;

But on Evangeline's heart fell his words as in  
winter the snow-flakes

Fall into some lone nest from which the birds  
have departed.



"Far to the north he has gone," continued the priest; "but in autumn, When the chase is done, will return again to the Mission."

Then Evangeline said, and her voice was meek and submissive,

"Let me remain with thee, for my soul is sad and afflicted."

So seemed it wise and well unto all; and betimes on the morrow,

Mounting his Mexican steed, with his Indian guides and companions,

Homeward Basil returned, and Evangeline stayed at the Mission.

Slowly, slowly, slowly the days succeeded each other, —

Days and weeks and months; and the fields of maize that were springing

Green from the ground when a stranger she came, now waving above her,

Lifted their slender shafts, with leaves interlacing, and forming

Cloisters for mendicant crows and granaries pillaged by squirrels.

Then in the golden weather the maize was husked, and the maidens

Blushed at each blood-red ear, for that betokened a lover,



But at the crooked laughed, and called it a thief  
in the corn-field.

Even the blood-red ear to Evangeline brought  
not her lover.

“Patience!” the priest would say; “have faith,  
and thy prayer will be answered!

Look at this vigorous plant that lifts its head  
from the meadow,

See how its leaves are turned to the north, as  
true as the magnet;

This is the compass-flower, that the finger of  
God has planted

Here in the houseless wild, to direct the trav-  
eller’s journey

Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the  
desert.

Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms  
of passion,

Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and fuller  
of fragrance,

But they beguile us, and lead us astray, and  
their odor is deadly.

Only this humble plant can guide us here, and  
hereafter

Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet  
with the dews of nepenthe.”

So came the autumn, and passed, and the  
winter,— yet Gabriel came not;

Blossomed the opening spring, and the notes of  
the robin and bluebird  
Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood, yet Gabriel came not.

But on the breath of the summer winds a rumor  
was wafted

Sweeter than song of bird, or hue or odor of  
blossom.

Far to the north and east, it said, in the Michigan forests,

Gabriel had his lodge by the banks of the Saginaw River.

And, with returning guides, that sought the  
lakes of St. Lawrence,

Saying a sad farewell, Evangeline went from the  
Mission.

When over weary ways, by long and perilous  
marches,

She had attained at length the depths of the  
Michigan forests,

Found she the hunter's lodge deserted and fallen  
to ruin !

Thus did the long sad years glide on, and in  
seasons and places

Divers and distant far was seen the wandering  
maiden ; —

Now in the Tents of Grace of the meek Moravian Missions,

Now in the noisy camps and the battle-fields of  
the army,  
Now in secluded hamlets, in towns and populous cities.  
Like a phantom she came, and passed away un-  
remembered.  
Fair was she and young, when in hope began  
the long journey;  
Faded was she and old, when in disappointment  
it ended.  
Each succeeding year stole something away  
from her beauty,  
Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the  
gloom and the shadow.  
Then there appeared and spread faint streaks of  
gray o'er her forehead,  
Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her earthly  
horizon,  
As in the Eastern sky the first faint streaks of  
the morning.

## V.

IN that delightful land which is washed by the  
Delaware's waters,  
Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn  
the apostle,  
Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream the  
city he founded.

There all the air is balm, and the peach is the  
emblem of beauty,  
And the streets still re-echo the names of the  
trees of the forest,  
As if they fain would appease the Dryads whose  
haunts they molested.  
There from the troubled sea had Evangeline  
landed, an exile,  
Finding among the children of Penn a home  
and a country.  
There old René Leblanc had died; and when  
he departed,  
Saw at his side only one of all his hundred  
descendants.  
Something at least there was in the friendly  
streets of the city,  
Something that spake to her heart, and made  
her no longer a stranger;  
And her ear was pleased with the Thee and  
Thou of the Quakers,  
For it recalled the past, the old Acadian  
country,  
Where all men were equal, and all were brothers  
and sisters.  
So, when the fruitless search, the disappointed  
endeavor,  
Ended, to recommence no more upon earth, un-  
complaining,  
Thither, as leaves to the light, were turned her  
thoughts and her footsteps.

As from a mountain's top the rainy mists of the  
morning  
Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape  
below us,  
Sun-illuminated, with shining rivers and cities  
and hamlets,  
So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw  
the world far below her,  
Dark no longer, but all illumined with love; and  
the pathway  
Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth  
and fair in the distance.  
Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart  
was his image,  
Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last  
she beheld him,  
Only more beautiful made by his deathlike  
silence and absence.  
Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for  
it was not.  
Over him years had no power; he was not  
changed, but transfigured;  
He had become to her heart as one who is  
dead, and not absent;  
Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion  
to others,  
This was a lesson a life of trial and sorrow had  
taught her.  
So was her love diffused, but, like to some  
odorous spices,

Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the  
air with aroma.

Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but  
to follow

Meekly, with reverent steps, the sacred feet of  
her Saviour.

Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy ;  
frequenting

Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes  
of the city,

Where distress and want concealed themselves  
from the sunlight,

Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished  
neglected.

Night after night, when the world was asleep,  
as the watchman repeated

Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was  
well in the city,

High at some lonely window he saw the light of  
her taper.

Day after day, in the gray of the dawn, as slow  
through the suburbs

Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and  
fruits for the market,

Met he that meek, pale face, returning home  
from its watchings.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on  
the city,

Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by  
flocks of wild pigeons,  
Darkening the sun in their flight, with naught in  
their craws but an acorn.  
And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month  
of September,  
Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a  
lake in the meadow,  
So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its natural  
margin,  
Spread to a brackish lake, the silver stream of  
existence.  
Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to  
charm, the oppressor ;  
But all perished alike beneath the scourge of his  
anger ; —  
Only, alas ! the poor, who had neither friends  
nor attendants,  
Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of  
the homeless.  
Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst of  
meadows and woodlands ; —  
Now the city surrounds it ; but still, with its  
gateway and wicket  
Meek, in the midst of splendor, its humble  
walls seem to echo  
Softly the words of the Lord : — “ The poor ye  
always have with you.”  
Thither, by night and by day, came the Sister  
of Mercy. The dying



Looked up into her face, and thought, indeed,  
to behold there  
Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead  
with splendor,  
Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints  
and apostles,  
Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen at a  
distance.  
Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the city  
celestial,  
Into whose shining gates erelong their spirits  
would enter.

Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets,  
deserted and silent,  
Wending her quiet way, she entered the door  
of the almshouse.  
Sweet on the summer air was the odor of  
flowers in the garden ;  
And she paused on her way to gather the fairest  
among them,  
That the dying once more might rejoice in their  
fragrance and beauty.  
Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors,  
cooled by the east wind,  
Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from  
the belfry of Christ Church,  
While, intermingled with these, across the  
meadows were wafted

Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the Swedes  
in their church at Wicaco.

Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the  
hour on her spirit ;

Something within her said, "At length thy  
trials are ended ;"

And, with light in her looks, she entered the  
chambers of sickness.

Noiselessly moved about the assiduous, careful  
attendants,

Moistening the feverish lip, and the aching  
brow, and in silence

Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and con-  
cealing their faces,

Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts of  
snow by the roadside.

Many a languid head, upraised as Evangeline  
entered,

Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while she  
passed, for her presence

Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the  
walls of a prison.

And, as she looked around, she saw how  
Death, the consoler,

Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed  
it forever.

Many familiar forms had disappeared in the  
night-time ;

Vacant their places were, or filled already by  
strangers.

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling  
of wonder,  
Still she stood, with her colorless lips apart,  
while a shudder  
Ran through her frame, and, forgotten, the  
flowerets dropped from her fingers,  
And from her eyes and cheeks the light and  
bloom of the morning.  
Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such  
terrible anguish,  
That the dying heard it, and started up from  
their pillows.  
On the pallet before her was stretched the form  
of an old man.  
Long, and thin, and gray were the locks that  
shaded his temples;  
But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for  
a moment  
Seemed to assume once more the forms of its  
earlier manhood;  
So are wont to be changed the faces of those  
who are dying.  
Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of  
the fever,  
As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had be-  
sprinkled its portals,  
That the Angel of Death might see the sign,  
and pass over.  
Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his  
spirit exhausted

Seemed to be sinking down through infinite  
depths in the darkness,  
Darkness of slumber and death, forever sinking  
and sinking.  
Then through those realms of shade, in multi-  
plied reverberations,  
Heard he that cry of pain, and through the  
hush that succeeded  
Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and  
saint-like,  
"Gabriel! O my beloved!" and died away into  
silence.  
Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the  
home of his childhood;  
Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers  
among them,  
Village, and mountain, and woodlands; and,  
walking under their shadow,  
As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in  
his vision.  
Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly he  
lifted his eyelids,  
Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt  
by his bedside.  
Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the  
accents unuttered  
Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what  
his tongue would have spoken.  
Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline,  
kneeling beside him,



.....  
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Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her  
bosom.

Sweet was the light of his eyes ; but it suddenly  
sank into darkness,

As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind  
at a casement.

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear,  
and the sorrow,

All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied  
longing,

All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of  
patience !

And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head  
to her bosom,

Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured,  
“ Father, I thank thee ! ”

---

STILL stands the forest primeval ; but far  
away from its shadow,

Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers  
are sleeping.

Under the humble walls of the little Catholic  
churchyard,

In the heart of the city. they lie, unknown and  
unnoticed.

Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing  
beside them,



Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs  
are at rest and forever,  
Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no  
longer are busy,  
Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have  
ceased from their labors,  
Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have  
completed their journey !

Still stands the forest primeval; but under  
the shade of its branches  
Dwells another race, with other customs and  
language.  
Only along the shore of the mournful and misty  
Atlantic  
Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers  
from exile  
Wandered back to their native land to die in its  
bosom.  
In the fisherman's cot the wheel and the loom  
are still busy ;  
Maidens still wear their Norman caps and their  
kirtles of homespun,  
And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline's  
story,  
While from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced,  
neighboring ocean  
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the  
wail of the forest.



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MAR 27 1881

